



# HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Environmental Health

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## **Abbreviated Process**

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### **Why final plats are revised?**

If you are planning to construct a pool, addition, garage, or some other accessory structure on your lot that utilizes a septic system you may have been informed by the Health Department or the Planning and Zoning Department that you must first re-record the septic reserve area on your lot to revise its configuration. This is because the proposed construction either extends into the septic reserve area as presently recorded, or is proposed very close to it. This is a problem since the Health Department has regulations that forbid the placement of houses and accessory structures within the septic reserve area. The Health Department also has setback regulations that determine how close a house or accessory structure can be constructed to a septic reserve area. You may also desire to change a septic reserve area configuration on a lot that is presently unimproved to accommodate a proposed house site that is different than the one that is proposed on the approved preliminary plan.

Finally you may also want to revise the presently recorded septic reserve area on your lot to reduce the square footage from its presently recorded size of 40,000sf to the newly reduced 20,000sf that became effective November 14, 2003.

Final plats are also revised through the abbreviated process when property lines are altered, lots are combined, or easements are added.

### **How to begin the process**

If you have been notified of a necessary final plat revision you may be wondering what to do next, or if it is even possible to revise your presently recorded reserve area. Or you may have even heard that in order to revise your septic reserve area you have to conduct another percolation test. All of these are very good questions and most can be answered in the first part of the plat revision process.

To begin the process, submit to the Health Department a plat drawn to scale that indicates all of the following items:

1. All existing and proposed structures (houses, sheds, garages, pools, decks, etc.).
2. Proposed or existing driveway and other paved areas.
3. Proposed or existing wells.
4. Existing septic system location if known.
5. Configuration of presently recorded reserve area.
6. Proposed area of revision for the septic reserve area.
7. Any neighboring wells and septic systems within 100 ft. of the property lines.

Once the plat is drawn, please submit it to the Bureau of Environmental Health, Resource Protection Division. If you have any questions please call one of the following telephone numbers at the Harford County Health Department for further information.

You will be notified if the plat is missing any items that the Health Department requires. Submission of another plat may be necessary. The plat does not have to be prepared by surveyor, initially. The owner can submit the plat at this point as long as it is drawn to scale and contains all required information. The Health Department will review the submitted plat to determine the following:

1. If the revision is possible (Some septic reserve areas cannot be revised)
2. If a percolation test is necessary to determine if the revised area proposed is satisfactory. Most septic reserve area reductions from 40,000sf to 20,00sf will require additional percolation testing. The percolation test fee is currently \$150.00.
3. If the revision cannot be approved as proposed, are there any alternatives to the proposal available (i.e. smaller structure, different location, etc.).

If the final plat revision cannot be approved, or a percolation test is required, the Health Department will notify you. Please keep in mind that if a percolation test is required, the Health Department may require that the percolation test be conducted during the wet season test period which typically occurs between (February 1st-April 30th). This could cause significant delays in the approval of your project or release of your building permit. If the revision can be approved, the Health Department will notify you of the next step in the process which is the preparation of the abbreviated preliminary plan by the engineer or surveyor.

#### **Preparation of the Revised Final Plat via an Abbreviated blueprint.**

If you have been notified by the Health Department that it is acceptable to revise your septic reserve area as proposed, you will then need to engage the services of a licensed surveyor or professional engineer. The engineer or surveyor that you select will prepare an Abbreviated Process Blueprint that is first submitted to the Health Department and then to the Department of Planning and Zoning. A licensed surveyor or professional engineer are the only parties that can submit plans for recordation through the County. This work cannot be done by the homeowner or another party.

Once the abbreviated process blueprint has been approved the final plat or mylar can be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Department. The submitted final plat must then circulate through the various Harford County departments and agencies for signature.